

# Slave Revolts

## RISING UP FOR FREEDOM

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TURNER  
TRAIL

1831  
Southampton  
Insurrection

The 1831 Southampton Insurrection is considered the most consequential slave revolt in North American history. It was, however, preceded by many others. Slaveholders lived in fear of such uprisings as enslaved people of African descent often outnumbered White citizens in rural and urban areas throughout the South.

### The Plant Cutter Revolt, 1663

This first known conspiracy took place on September 1 in Gloucester County, Virginia. Dissatisfied with their heavy workload, living conditions, and unfair treatment, indentured servants and enslaved people of European and African descent joined to plan a revolt. They were, however, betrayed and subdued.

erupted, one damaging Fort George. Two Blacks were arrested. Before they were burned at the stake, they confessed to being part of a much larger plot. Eventually, 152 Blacks and 20 Whites were arrested. Many were deported. The ringleaders, an enslaved man, Casor, and a White tavern keeper were executed. Their corpses were left to hang and rot in public view.

### The Stono Rebellion, 1739

From September 9-11, armed enslaved people from South Carolina began marching to Florida to secure their freedom. More than 20 White people and 40 Blacks were killed before the revolt was suppressed. It was the largest uprising in colonial America.

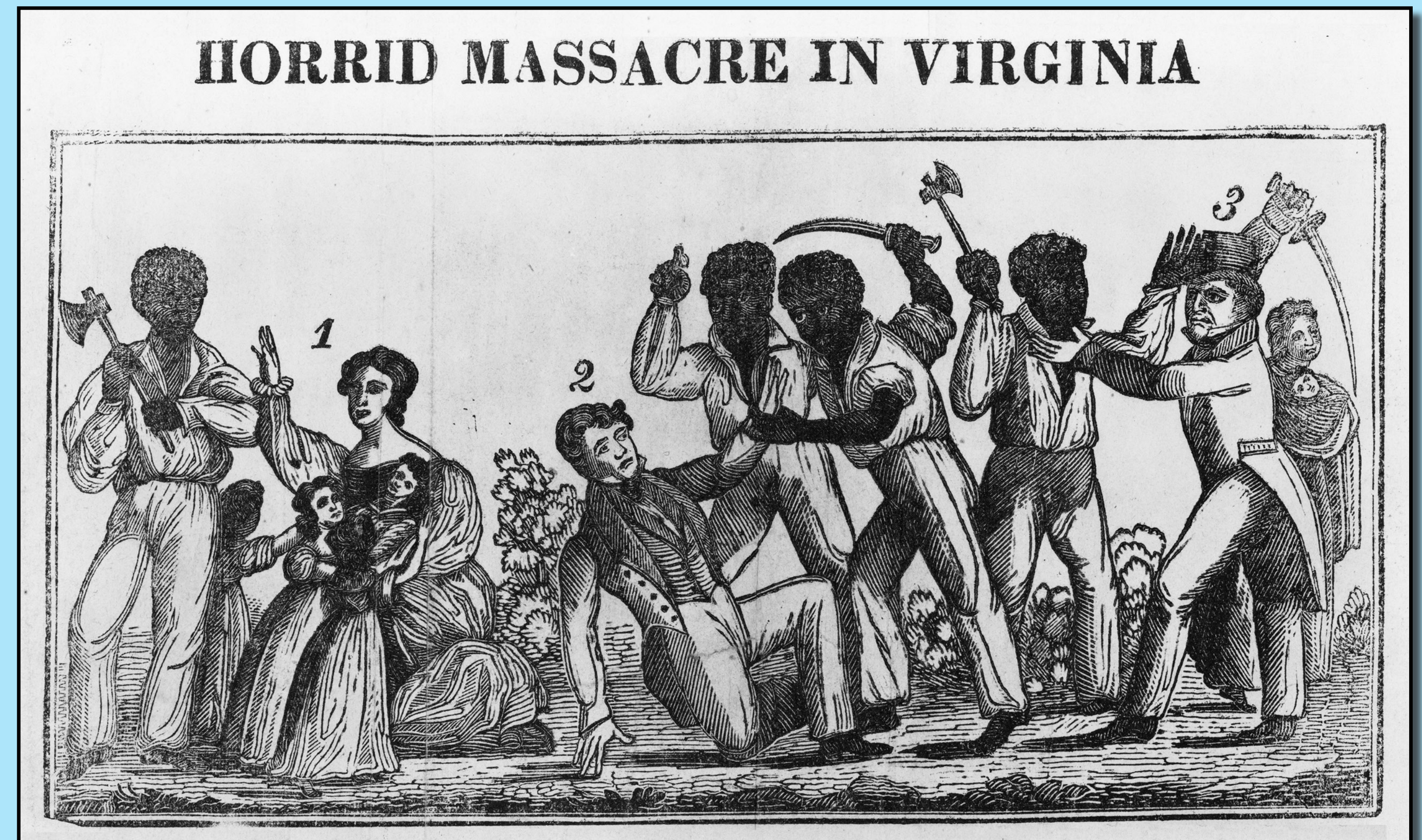
### Gabriel's Rebellion, 1800

Gabriel Prosser, an enslaved, literate blacksmith, planned a slave invasion of Richmond, Virginia. On August 30, 1800, severe weather delayed this insurrection. Subsequently, Gabriel was betrayed by two bondsmen, Tom and Pharaoh, owned by Mosby Sheppard. Gabriel was arrested and executed with 35 of his co-conspirators.

*"It is important to acknowledge that history favorably regards Gabriel's cause while consigning legions who sought to keep him and others in chains to be forgotten."* —Then-Virginia Governor Tim Kaine's informal pardon, issued August 30, 2007.

### New York Revolts, 1712 & 1741

A fire on April 6, 1712, incited the first New York City slave revolt. Thirteen White people were casualties, and 21 enslaved Africans were executed. More than 70 Black people were arrested. Again in 1741, a series of 13 fires



*Toussaint Louverture, leader of the 1791 overthrow of the French colonial regime in Haiti, inspired Gabriel Prosser.*

*Detail from montage of images of Southampton County, Virginia. Photograph of woodcut, published 1831. Caption reads: "Fig 1. a Mother intreating for the lives of her children. -2. Mr. Travis, cruelly murdered by his own Slaves. -3. Mr. Barrow, who bravely defended himself until his wife escaped."*

### Other Notable Pre-1831 Slave Revolts

**Haitian Slave Revolt**  
August 22, 1791  
Saint-Domingue (Haiti)

**German Coast Rebellion**  
January 8-10, 1811  
Near New Orleans, Louisiana

**George Boxley Rebellion**  
March 6, 1815  
Spotsylvania County, Virginia

**Denmark Vesey Revolt**  
July 14, 1822  
Charleston, South Carolina